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ABSTRACT

A study examined the need for professional development (PD) activities for teachers and administrators providing vocational education for students with disabilities in Florida. Separate teacher and administrator surveys consisting of statements to be rated on a Likert scale were mailed to the administrators responsible for direction of vocational education in Florida's school districts, community colleges, and area vocational-technical centers (AVTCs) and to a sample of teachers who had been randomly selected from lists of advisers to local vocational student organizations and program directories. The response rates were as follows: school district administrators, 65%; community college administrators, 60%; AVTC administrators, 54%; and teachers, 23%. The responses indicated a clear and present need for more PD activities to prepare vocational teachers to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education and to increase awareness of available financial and human resources. An overwhelming preference for PD activities conducted at the local level was expressed. The following recommendations were made to the State Board of Career Education: encourage the implementation of interdisciplinary interagency PD activities, develop and disseminate a model PD strategy for school districts and community colleges, and continue supporting PD activities at state/regional conferences. (Fifteen charts are included. The survey instruments are appended.) (MN)

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*In Pursuit of Empowerment
A Survey Assessing the Need for
Professional Development Activities
for Teachers and Administrators
Providing Vocational Education for
Students with Disabilities in Florida*



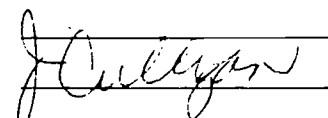
Florida Council on Vocational Education

June 1994

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IN PURSUIT OF EMPOWERMENT
A Survey Assessing the Need for Professional Development
Activities for Teachers and Administrators Providing
Vocational Education for Student with Disabilities in Florida

**FLORIDA COUNCIL
ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

June 1994

Copies of this report are available upon request from:

**Florida Council on Vocational Education
Florida Education Center
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	v
Council Membership	vii
Preface	ix
Acknowledgements	xi
Introduction	1
Mission	1
Method	1
Results	2
Comparative Responses	2
Administrator-specific Responses	11
Teacher-specific Responses	19
Technical Assistance Strategies	26
Analysis	27
Awareness of Support Services	27
Vocational Education, Exceptional Student Education Cooperation	27
Student Needs and Success	27
Inservice Opportunities	28
Program Awareness	28
Human Resources	28
Current Funding	29
Technical Assistance Strategies	29
Conclusions	30
Recommendations	31
Appendix	33

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

CHART 1. I am aware of support services available to students with disabilities enrolled in vocational education.	3
CHART 2. I am aware of student services provided by community agencies.	5
CHART 3. I am aware of student services provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.	7
CHART 4. There is close, ongoing communication among vocational education and exceptional student education administrators/staff at my school.	9
CHART 5. (Administrators Responses) There is joint planning among vocational and exceptional education administrators at my school.0	
CHART 6. (Administrators Responses) I am particularly aware of services provided under the Job Training Partnership Act to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.	12
CHART 7. (Administrators Responses) I am aware of vocational education programs that are specifically designed to prepare students with disabilities with careers.	14
CHART 8. (Administrators Responses) I am aware of inservice education opportunities to help teachers prepare to assist students with disabilities to succeed in vocational education.	15
CHART 9. (Administrators Responses) Current funding for the provision of services to students with disabilities is adequate.	17
CHART 10. (Teacher Responses) Students with disabilities are successful in vocational education when special services are provided.	18
CHART 11. (Teacher Responses) Students with disabilities require more individualized attention than non-disabled students.	20
CHART 12. (Teacher Responses) I know who to call for help or information when I have a question about a student with a disability.	21

CHART 13. (Teacher Responses) I have had opportunities for inservice activities to better prepare me to help students with disabilities success in vocational education programs. 22

CHART 14. (Teacher Responses) I have had opportunities for inservice activities to help me understand the services that are available under the Job Training Partnership Act to help students with disabilities success in vocational education programs. 23

CHART 15. (Teacher Responses) I have had opportunities for inservice activities to help me understand the services that are available from state and community agencies to help students with disabilities success in vocational education programs. 24

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Preface

In *Florida's Blueprint for School to Community Transition* (Florida Department of Education, 1993) numerous "troubling" statistics regarding the utilization of educational services by students with disabilities were revealed. These figures dealt with the secondary and postsecondary education participation and with the use of services provided by other state and community agencies.

The document indicates that of Florida's 64,000 students with disabilities who are between the ages of 14 and 22, only 3 percent or 1,920 are enrolled in secondary vocational programs. The completion rate for this population of 1,920 students with disabilities is 7 percent. The document also notes that in Florida students with disabilities comprise less than 2 percent of the college population.

Citing other sources, the document's authors remind us that less than 15 percent of young adults with disabilities continue their formal education or training experiences beyond high school, compared to more than 50 percent of the general population in the same age group.

Looking at the work of other state and community agencies, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Private Industry Councils, the document demonstrates a lack of utilization of key transition resources by students with disabilities.

Alarmed by such statistics, and charged by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technical Education Act Amendments of 1990 with the duty to recommend ways to improve programs for students with disabilities, the Florida Council on Vocational Education undertook an investigation of the utilization gap. The first step in that investigation was to determine whether or not the teachers and administrators who may work with students with disabilities are aware of the services that are available, and if they have opportunities to improve their awareness of them.

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**A SURVEY ASSESSING THE NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS PROVIDING
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN FLORIDA**

INTRODUCTION

Mission

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990 mandate that during each State plan period each State Council on Vocational Education shall make recommendations to the State Board for Vocational Education and make reports to the Governor, the business community, and the general public of the State, concerning policies the State should pursue to strengthen vocational education with particular attention to programs for people with disabilities. . . . [Section 112(d)(2)(B)]

In order to explore this topic with regard to developing useful recommendations that would help improve programs by improving the conditions of those who teach and administer them, the Council recruited a task force of experts from agencies that seek to assist individuals with disabilities to lead useful and productive lives. Included on the task force, along with the representative of the Florida Council on Vocational Education, were representatives of the Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students; the Division of Applied Technology and Adult Education; the Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens; the Developmental Disabilities Program Office; the Division of Blind Services; the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Program Office; the Division of Labor, Employment and Training; the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission; and a parental representative.

The purpose of this task force was twofold. First, the members provided insight and advice to the Council, assisting in the creation of a survey instrument by which the knowledge, experiences, and attitudes of teachers and administrators could be sampled. The second purpose of the task force was to provide assistance in the interpretation of the survey results.

Method

Two surveys were devised, one for administrators of vocational programs, and one for vocational teachers. Although several of the questions on the two surveys were identical, to allow a comparison of views, not all were. Some questions were population specific. Both surveys were purposely kept brief.

Both surveys contained statements for which the level of agreement was sought, using a Likert scale. They also contained requests for listing and ranking and provided opportunities for open-ended comment. The survey instruments are included in the appendix.

For this project, the administrators surveyed were responsible for the direction of vocational education in Florida's school districts, community colleges, and area vocational-technical centers. The teachers who were surveyed were randomly selected from lists of advisors to local vocational student organizations and from program directories.

The surveys were mailed, along with a letter from the chairman of the Florida Council on Vocational Education, a brochure describing the Council, and an addressed return envelope. The initial returns were tabulated and discussed at the April meeting of the Florida Council on Vocational Education. The initial results were also discussed at the May meeting of the State Council on Vocational Education for Individuals with Disabilities, members of which had served on the task force assembled to assist in the creation of the survey.

Rates of return varied among surveyed populations. School district administrators had the highest rate of return with 65 percent responding. In close second were community college administrators. Sixty percent of them returned the survey. Area vocational-technical center administrators had a 54 percent rate of return. Twenty-three percent of the teachers surveyed returned their surveys.

The survey results of the Likert-rated statements, which follow, are reported in whole numbers. Due to rounding, and to the development that all respondents did not respond to all survey elements, percentages reported for some populations may not sum to 100. Nevertheless, even in such cases the trend is clearly discernable.

RESULTS

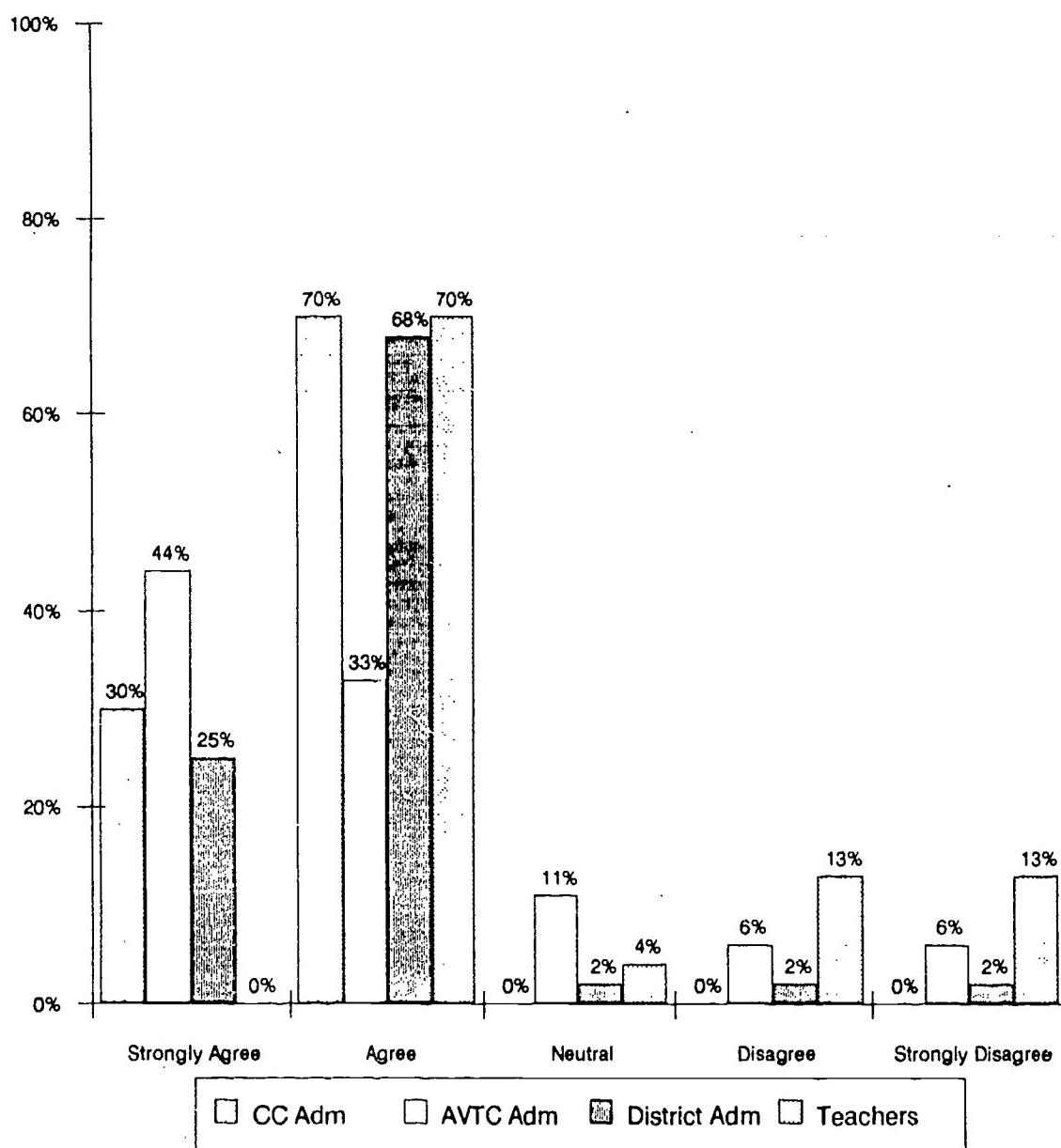
Comparative Responses

All surveyed populations were asked to indicate the degree of agreement with four statements concerning awareness of support services and in-school cooperation.

*I am aware of support services available to students
with disabilities enrolled in vocational education.*

All populations reported strong levels of agreement to this statement. Thirty percent of community college administrators strongly agreed and the remainder agreed. Forty-four percent of area vocational-technical center (AVTC) directors strongly agreed and 33 percent agreed. Twenty-five percent of school district directors strongly agreed and 68 percent agreed. Seventy percent of teachers agreed, none strongly.

CHART 1. I am aware of support services available to students with disabilities enrolled in vocational education.



Neutrality was expressed by 11 percent of AVTC directors, 4 percent of teachers, and 2 percent of school district administrators. Thirteen percent of teachers expressed disagreement, as did 5 percent of AVTC directors and 2 percent of district directors. The same percentages strongly disagreed as disagreed in each group.

As the line of inquiry proceeded to investigate awareness of services other than those provided by the school system, a sharp divergence of population responses emerged. Whereas over three-quarters of the administrators of postsecondary institutions--community colleges and area centers--acknowledged awareness of services provided by community agencies, less than two thirds of school district administrators did. For teachers a positive response was given by only slightly more than a third.

I am aware of student services provided by community agencies.

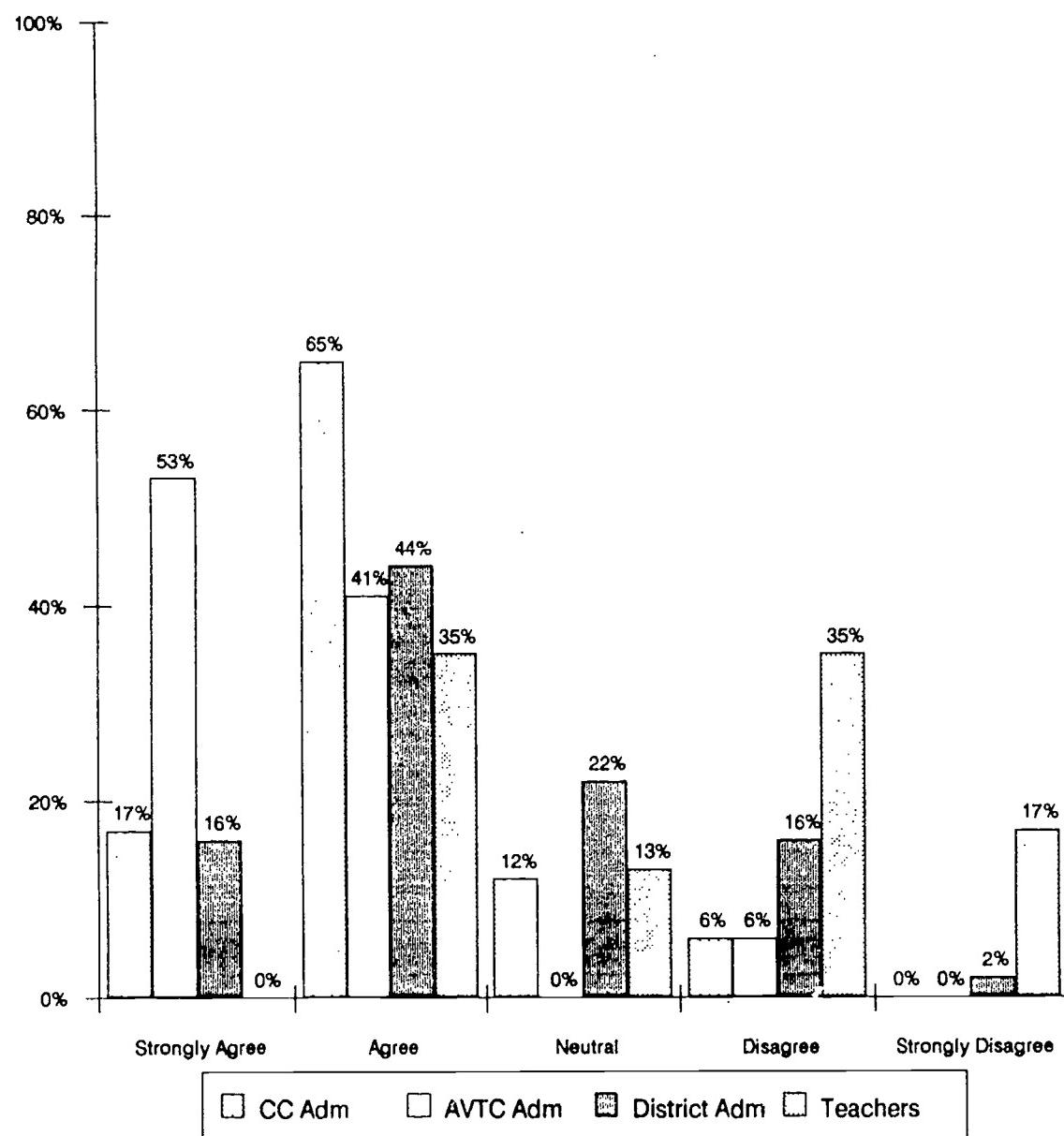
Directors of area vocational-technical centers exhibited the strongest awareness with 53 percent opting for the "Strongly Agree" category. Another 41 percent marked "Agree." Only 6 percent disagreed with the statement.

Community college officials followed closely with 17 percent marking "Strongly Agree" and 65 percent choosing the "Agree" response. Like the AVTC directors, 6 percent disagreed with the statement. Twelve percent expressed neutrality.

Indications of awareness continued to decline as the focus moved to school district administrators. Sixteen percent of them indicated strong agreement, 44 percent indicated agreement, and 22 percent indicated neutrality. The "Disagree" category was chosen by 16 percent and the "Strongly Disagree" category by 2 percent.

Teachers reported markedly less awareness of community-provided support services. Although 35 percent agreed, the same number disagreed, and 17 percent strongly disagreed. Thirteen percent were neutral. None strongly agreed.

CHART 2. I am aware of student services provided by community agencies.



When the area of inquiry focused on a single public agency, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the divergence of expressed awareness became even more marked. More than twice as many teachers as administrators of each category expressed disagreement with the survey statement.

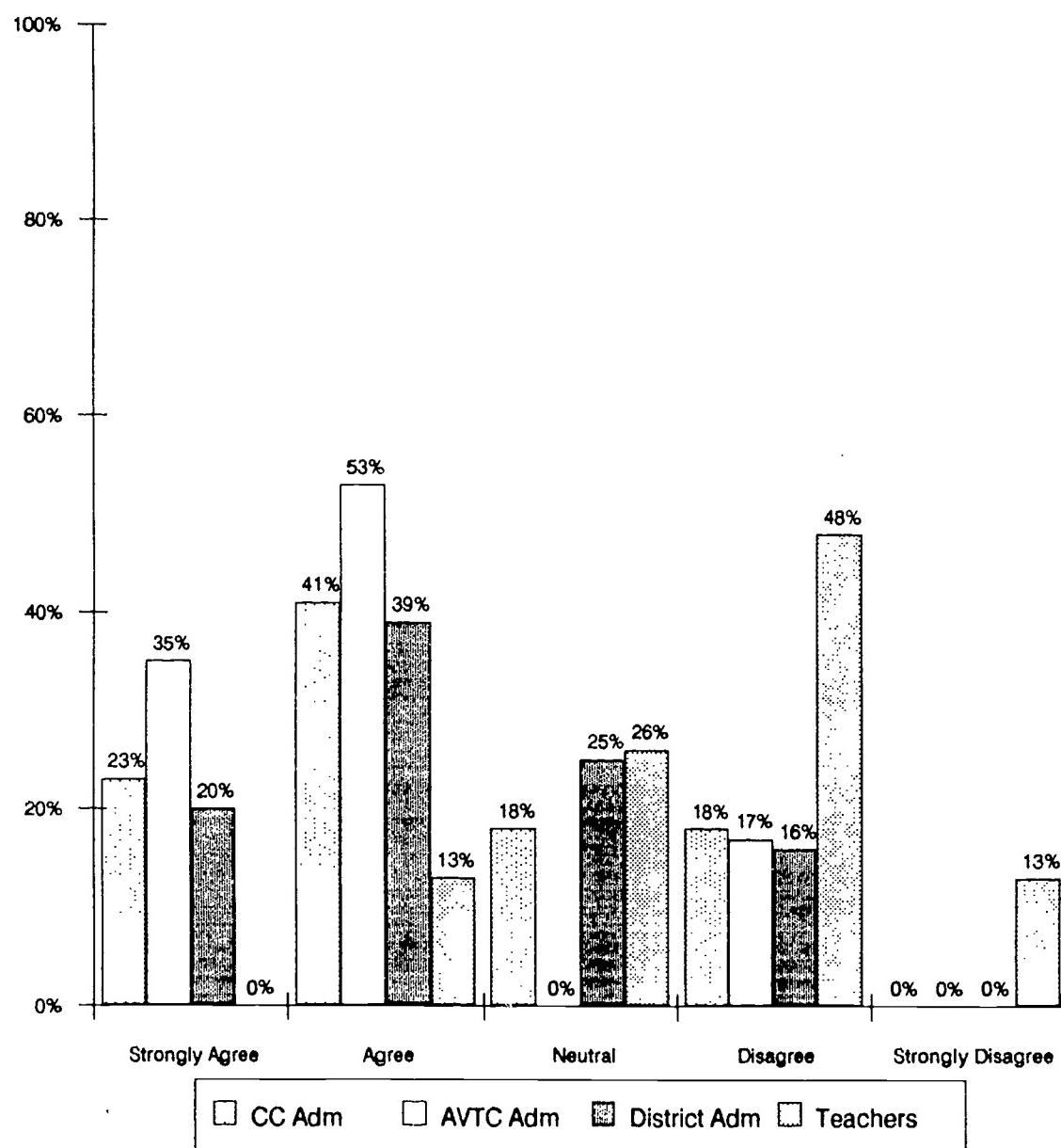
I am aware of student services provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Only 13 percent of teachers expressed agreement with the statement. The same number strongly disagreed. More than three times as many, 48 percent, disagreed with the statement. A quarter (26 percent) of the teachers expressed neutrality.

Majorities of all groups of administrators continued to agree or strongly agree, but levels of disagreement and neutrality rose. The greatest level of agreement was noted by administrators of area centers. Fifty-three percent agreed and 35 percent strongly agreed with the statement. The group with the next highest percentage of agreement was community college administrators. Of them, 41 percent agreed and 23 percent strongly agreed. Thirty-nine percent of school district administrators agreed and 21 percent strongly agreed. A quarter of the school district administrators and 18 percent of community college administrators were neutral.

The percentages of disagreement for community college administrators, school district administrators, and area center directors were 18, 16, and 12 percent, respectively. No administrators strongly disagreed with the statement.

CHART 3. I am aware of student services provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.



Communication among exceptional education and vocational education was the other issue addressed by surveys of teachers and administrators. There was a slight difference in that administrators were asked about communication among administrators, and teachers were asked about communication among staff. As with the previous entries, agreement was higher among administrators than among teachers.

There is close, ongoing communication among vocational education and exceptional student education administrators at my school.

More than 60 percent of the administrators in each category were in general agreement with this statement. Thirty-eight percent of area center directors strongly agreed and another 28 percent agreed. For school district administrators the response was similar, but inverted. Twenty-five percent strongly agreed and 36 percent agreed. Although only 17 percent of community college administrators strongly agreed, 53 percent chose the "Agree" response.

Levels of general disagreement were also quite close. Six percent of community college administrators disagreed and 12 percent disagreed strongly. Six percent of area center directors disagreed and 11 percent disagreed strongly. No school district administrators expressed strong disagreement, but 16 percent did disagree. "Neutral" was the selection of 12 percent of community college administrators, 16 percent of area center administrators, and 23 percent of school district administrators.

As previously noted, teachers were asked to respond to a statement regarding the ongoing communication among exceptional student education and vocational education staff.

There is close, ongoing communication among vocational education and exceptional student education staff at my school.

Although the plurality of those who agreed with the statement was the largest, those expressing disagreement did so more forcefully. "Strongly Agree" was the choice of 9 percent; "Agree" was the choice of 35 percent; and "Neutral" was the choice of 17 percent. While 9 percent of the teachers chose to disagree with the statement, 30 percent disagreed strongly.

From this point on the surveys themselves diverged. Administrators were asked to address additional awareness, planning, and funding issues. The survey of teachers focused on classroom and inservice activities.

CHART 4. There is close, ongoing communication among vocational education and exceptional student education administrators/staff at my school.

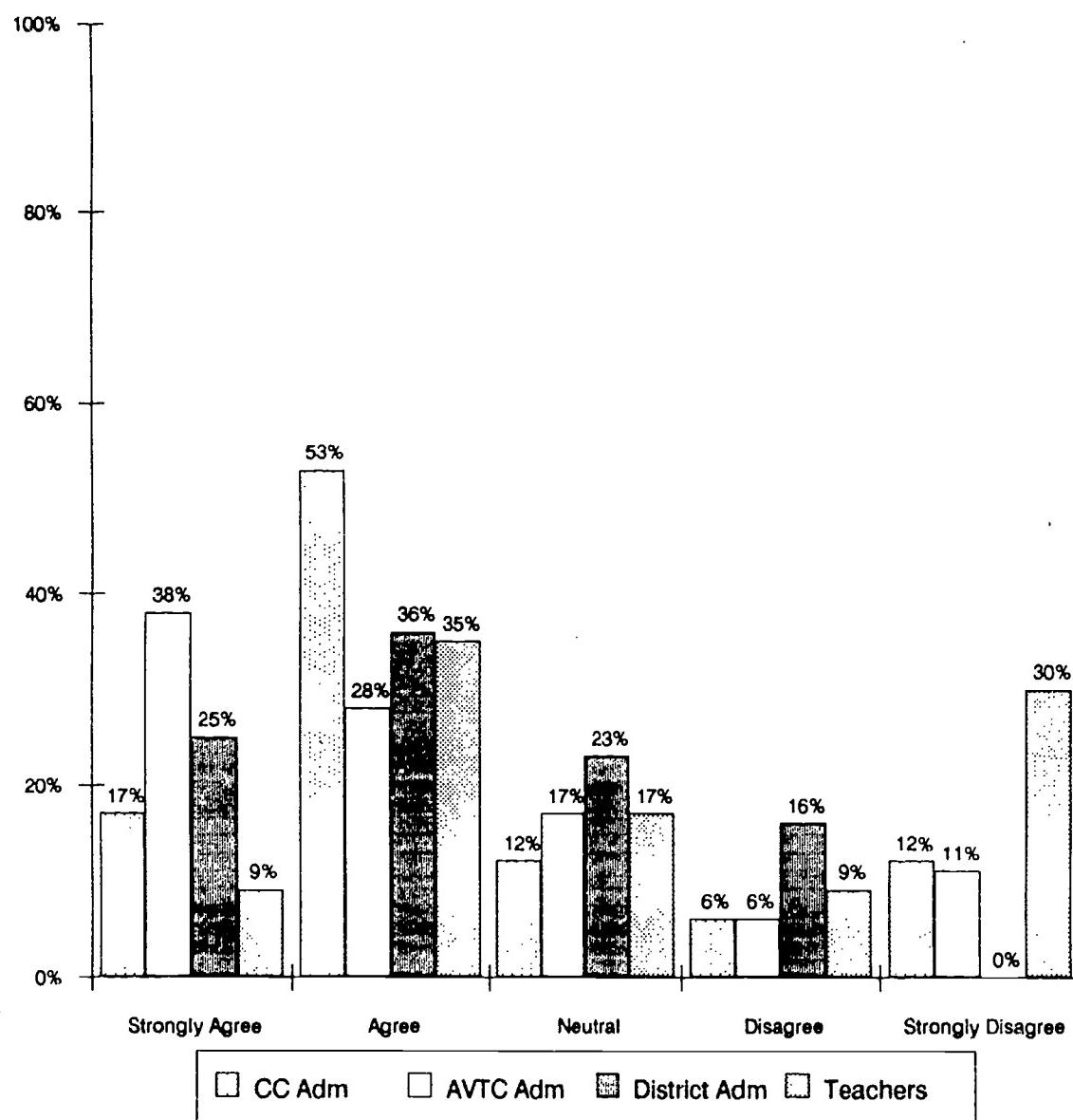
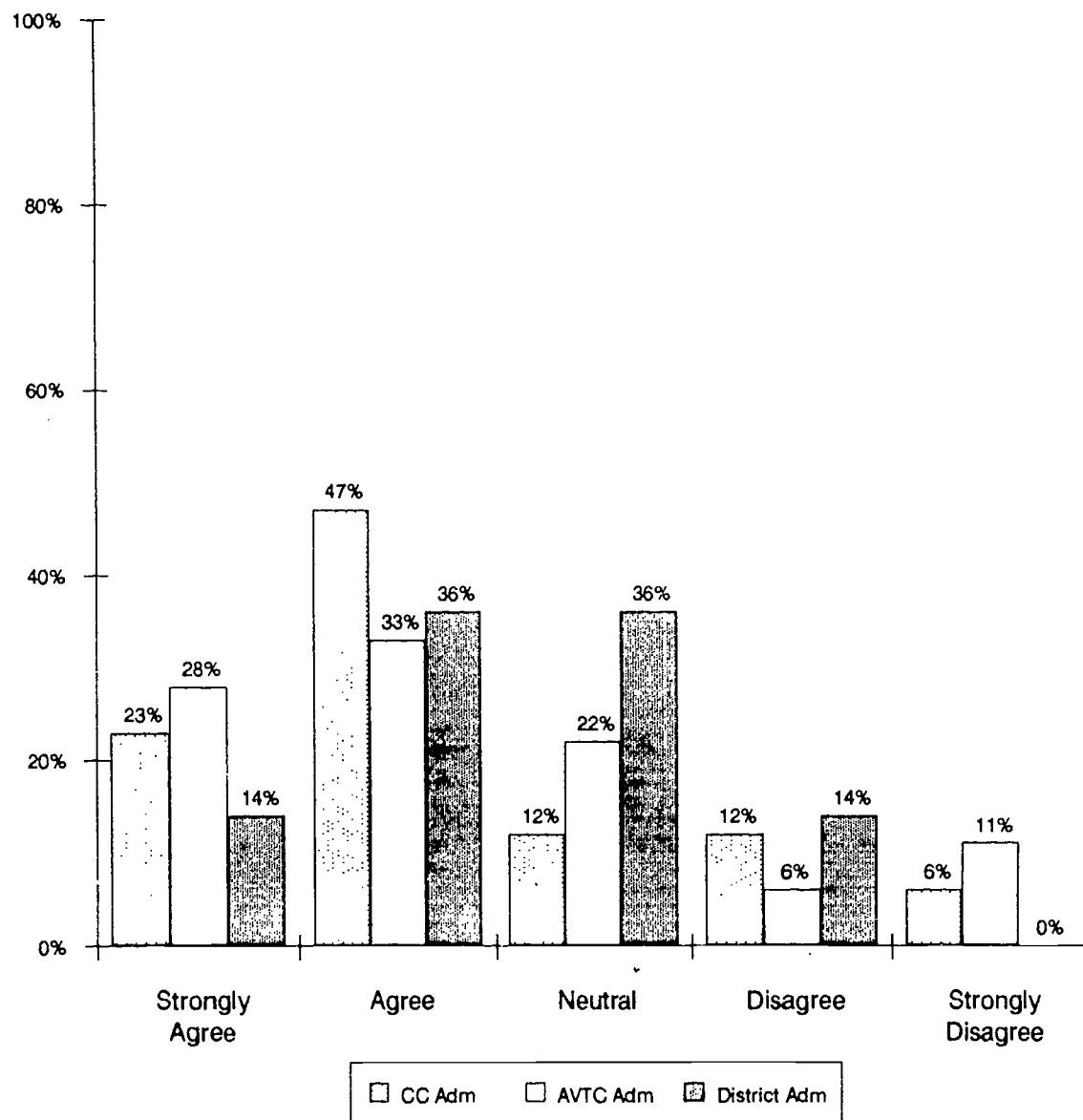


CHART 5. (Administrator Responses) There is joint planning among vocational and exceptional student education administrators at my school.



Administrator-specific Responses

Following the inquiry on the subject of communication among administrators was a request to address the area of joint planning.

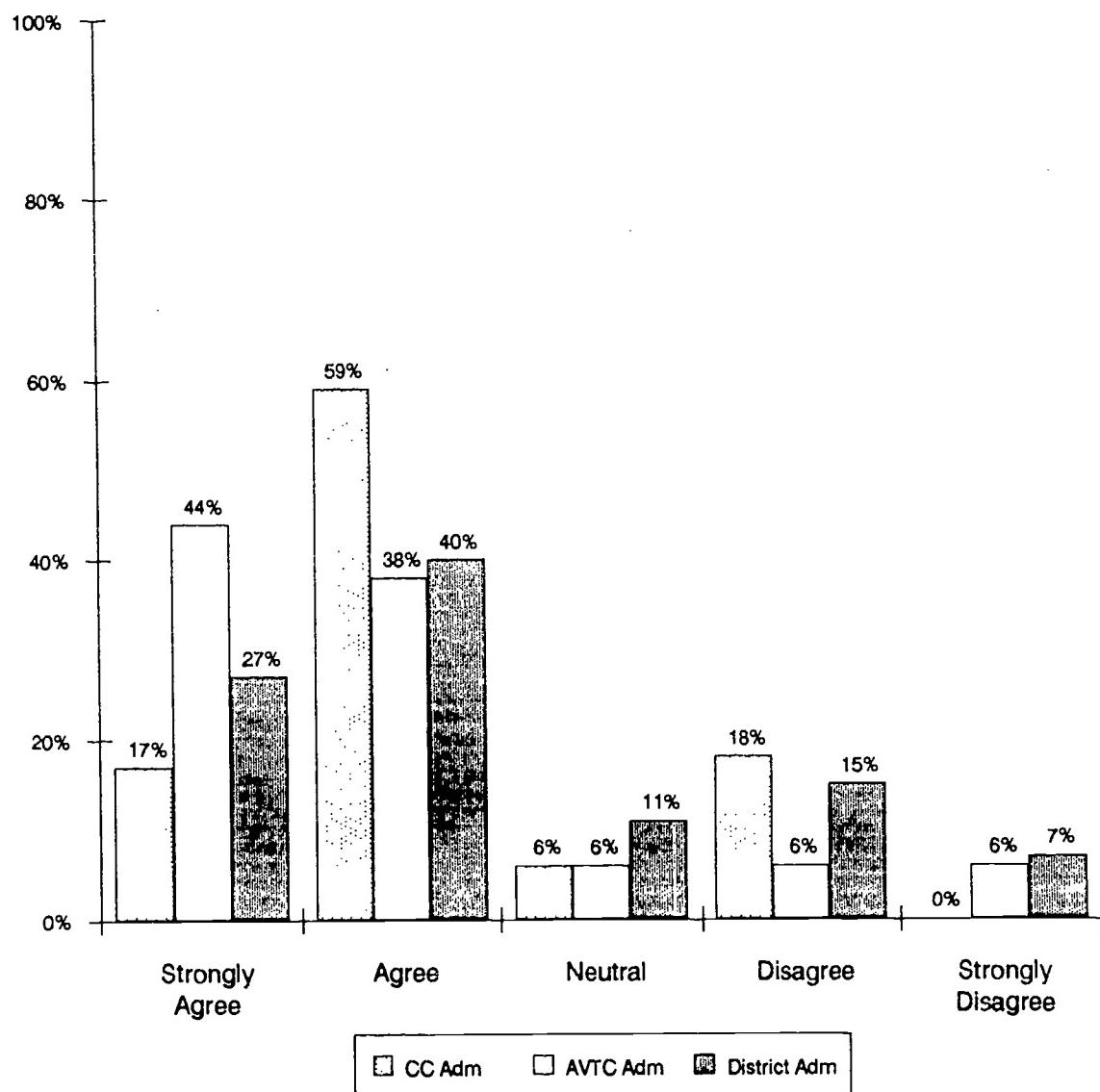
There is joint planning among vocational and exceptional student education administrators at my school.

The responses to this statement are similar to those responding to the issue of ongoing communication. The major difference is that greater numbers of district and area center administrators chose to indicate neutrality on the subject.

Twenty-eight percent of AVTC directors, 23 percent of community college administrators, and 14 percent of school district administrators chose to strongly agree; 33 percent, 47 percent, and 36 percent of the same groups chose to agree.

Thirty-six percent of school district administrators chose to express neutrality, followed by 22 percent of area center directors and 12 percent of community college deans. School district administrators also lead the "Disagree" field with 14 percent choosing this category. None of them, however, disagreed strongly. Twelve percent of community college respondents disagreed and 6 percent strongly disagreed, while 6 percent of AVTC respondents disagreed and 11 percent disagreed strongly.

CHART 6. (Administrator Responses) I am particularly aware of services provided under the Job Training Partnership Act to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.



In addition to their awareness of services provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the administrators were also asked to declare their awareness of services provided under the Job Training Partnership Act. Levels of general agreement were high for all categories, with area center directors leading.

I am particularly aware of services provided under the Job Training Partnership Act to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.

Forty-four percent of area center directors strongly agreed with the statement. Another 38 percent agreed. Each of the other three selections were chosen by 6 percent of the AVTC respondents.

Of the community college respondents, only 17 percent strongly agreed, but 59 percent agreed. Six percent were neutral, 18 percent disagreed, and none disagreed strongly.

School district administrators strongly agreed in 27 percent of cases, with another 40 percent agreeing. Eleven percent were neutral, 15 percent disagreed, and 7 percent disagreed strongly.

Though the level of general agreement remained high, retaining majorities of the respondents, there was a noticeable decrease when the administrators were asked to respond to a statement about programs specifically designed for students with disabilities.

I am aware of vocational education programs that are specifically designed to prepare students with disabilities for careers.

Twenty-eight percent of area center respondents, 17 percent of school district administrators, and 12 percent of community college officials strongly agreed with the statement while 38 percent, 50 percent, and 47 percent, respectively, agreed.

The "Neutral" response was chosen by 29 percent of community college administrators, 19 percent of school district administrators, and 17 percent of AVTC directors. The "Disagree" response was chosen by 17 percent of AVTC directors and by 12 percent of each of the other two groups. No AVTC or community college respondents strongly disagreed, but two percent of school district administrators did.

CHART 7. (Administrator Responses) I am aware of vocational education programs that are specifically designed to prepare students with disabilities for careers.

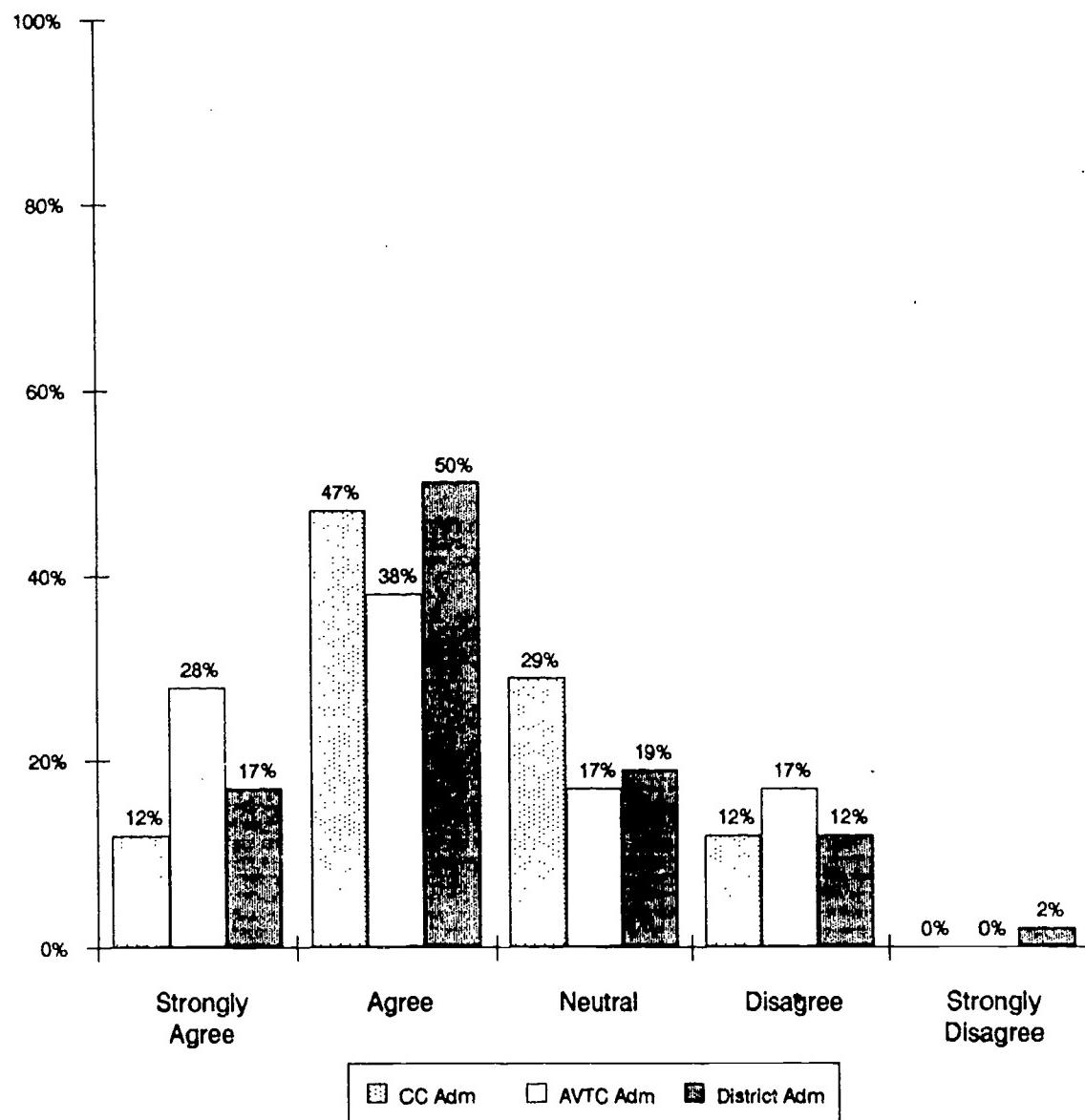
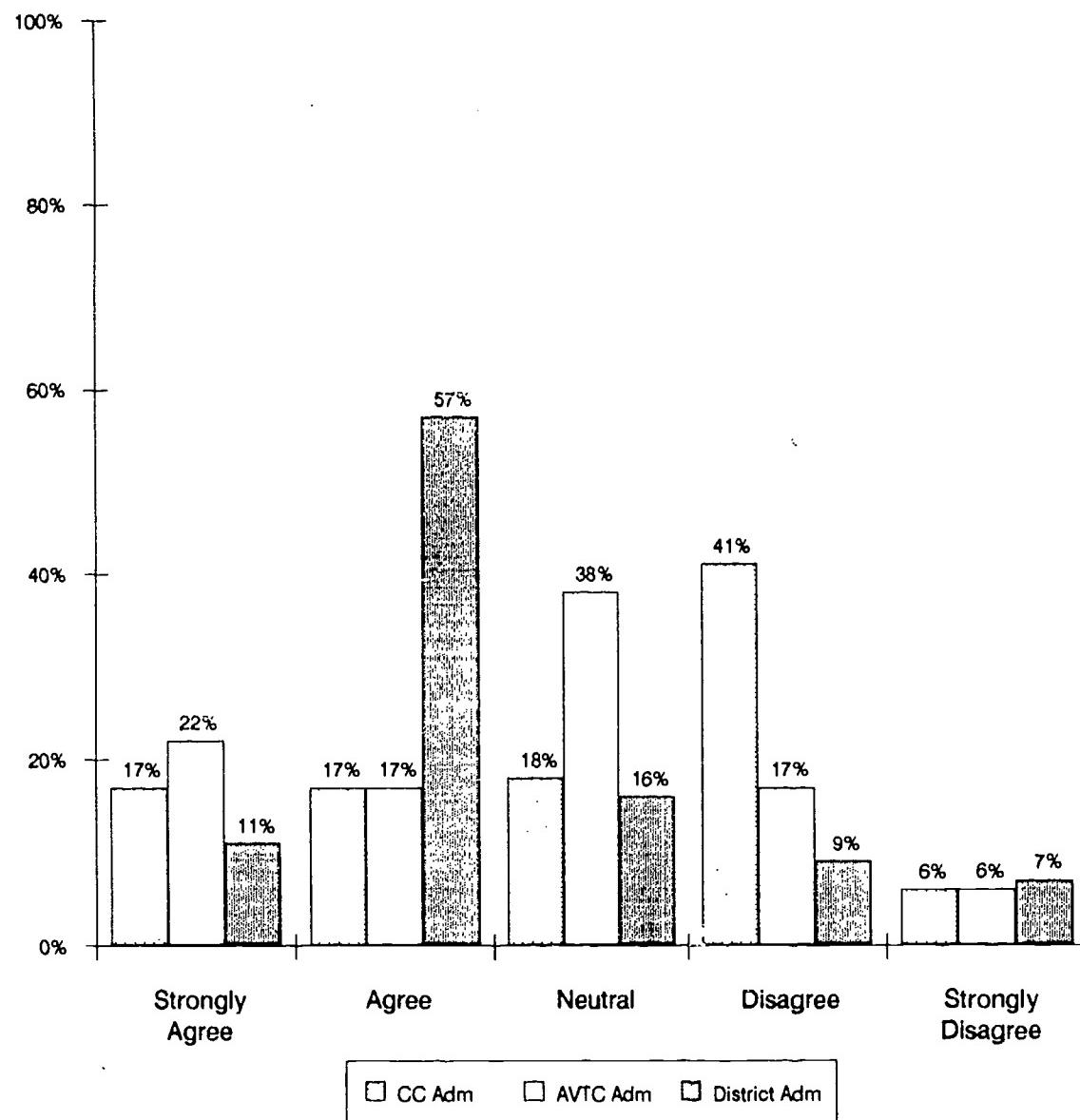


CHART 8. (Administrator Responses) I am aware of inservice education opportunities to help teachers prepare to assist students with disabilities to succeed in vocational education.



The level of general disagreement increased on the subject of the availability of inservice opportunities for teachers. School district administrators had the highest rate of general agreement, nearly twice as high as community college administrators.

I am aware of inservice education opportunities to help teachers prepare to assist students with disabilities to succeed in vocational education.

Fifty-seven percent of the responding school district officials agreed with the statement and 11 percent strongly agreed. Sixteen percent expressed neutrality, 9 percent disagreed, and 7 percent strongly disagreed.

The highest level of neutrality, 38 percent, was found among area center respondents. Equal groups of 17 percent agreed and disagreed. Twenty-two percent strongly agreed and 6 percent strongly disagreed.

The largest number of respondents from the community colleges, 41 percent, chose to disagree. Another 6 percent disagreed strongly. Each of the other three response choices received a selection rate of between 17 and 18 percent.

The inquiry into adequacy of funding showed the greatest amount of dissatisfaction among administrators.

Current funding for the provision of services to students with disabilities is adequate.

Community college administrators responded with 41 percent choosing to strongly disagree and 35 percent to disagree. None opted for neutrality, 18 percent agreed with the statement, and 6 percent strongly agreed.

Administrators of AVTCs were less adamant, but the level of general agreement barely edged over the quarter mark. Eleven percent strongly agreed and 16 percent agreed. The two largest response categories selected were "Strongly Disagree" and "Neutral." Both selections were chosen by 28 percent of the respondents. As with the "Agree" category, 16 percent disagreed.

The responses of the school district administrators were somewhat more evenly distributed, but general disagreement was still expressed by the majority. The largest response group, 32 percent, disagreed with the statement and 21 percent strongly disagreed. "Neutral" was the choice of 19 percent. Only a fifth (21 percent) of the respondents agreed with the statement, and 7 percent agreed strongly.

CHART 9. (Administrator Responses) Current funding for the provision of services to students with disabilities is adequate.

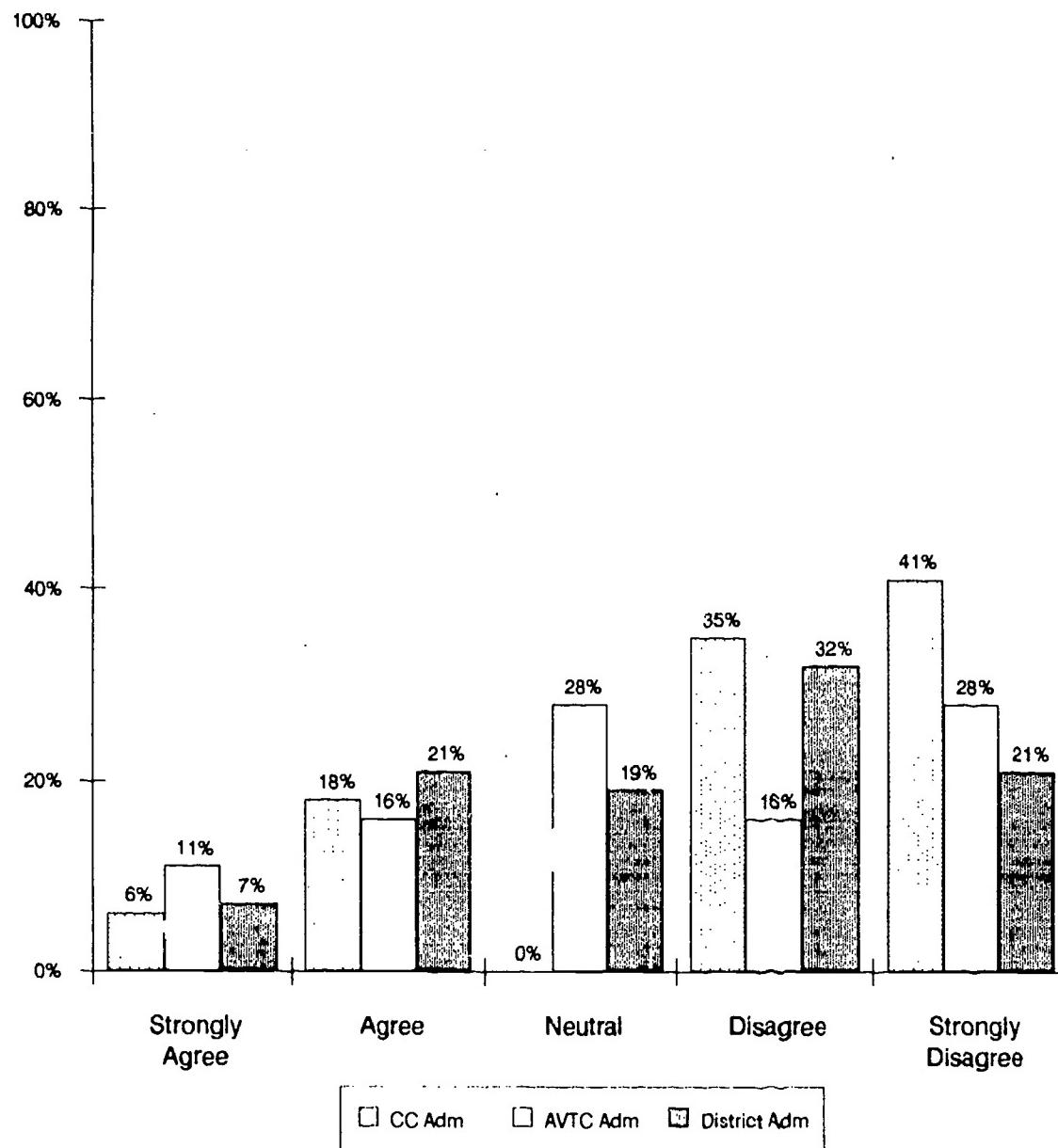
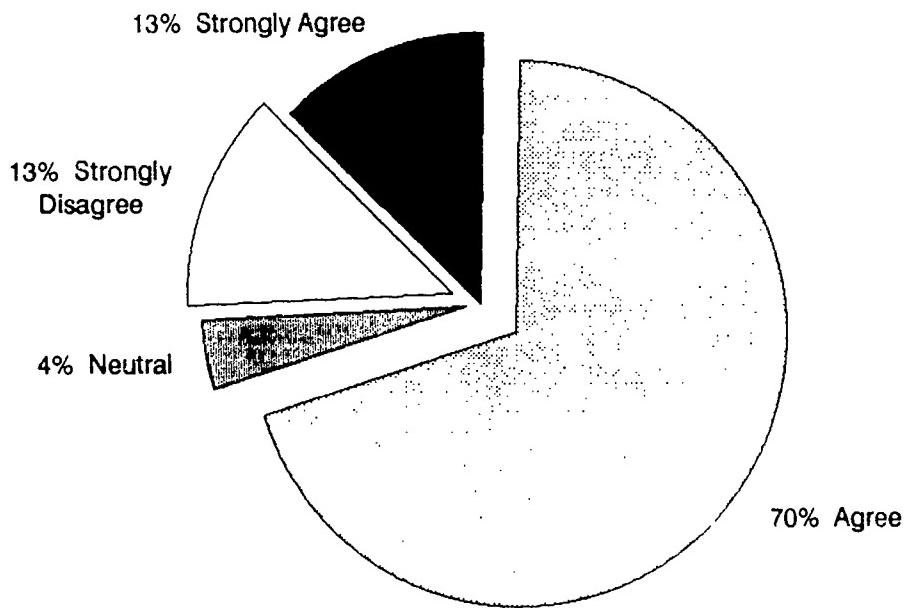


CHART 10. (Teacher Responses) Students with disabilities are successful in vocational education when special services are provided as needed.



Teacher-specific Responses

The additional questions focused on classroom and inservice activities. Some were philosophical in nature. Others dealt with awareness. The statement on student success generated what appeared to be a philosophical response.

Students with disabilities are successful in vocational education when special services are provided as needed.

The largest response categories was "Agree" with 70 percent. "Strongly Agree" and "Strongly Disagree" each garnered 13 percent. Four percent selected the "Neutral" response. No one disagreed.

The statement which followed stimulated an expected response that could have originated in experience or simply in observation.

Students with disabilities require more individualized attention than non-disabled students.

Almost half of the respondents (48 percent) strongly agreed with the statement, 43 percent agreed, and 9 percent expressed neutrality. No other categories were selected.

A much different response was received to the statement regarding knowing where to get help. Agreement and disagreement were the same as were their stronger counterparts.

I know who to call for help or information when I have a question about a student with a disability.

"Strongly Agree" and "Strongly Disagree" were each chosen by 9 percent of respondents. The "Agree" and "Disagree" choices were also the same with 29 percent choosing to agree with the statement and 29 percent choosing to disagree. The remaining 24 percent selected the response indicating neutrality.

CHART 11. (Teacher Responses) Students with disabilities require more individualized attention than non-disabled students.

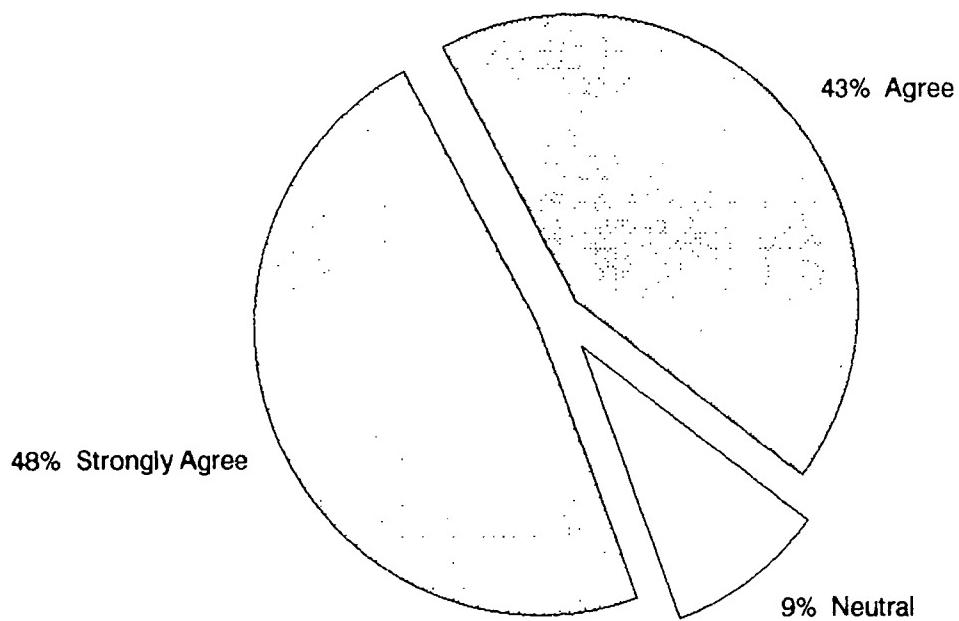


CHART 12. (Teacher Responses) I know who to call for help or information when I have a question about a student with a disability.

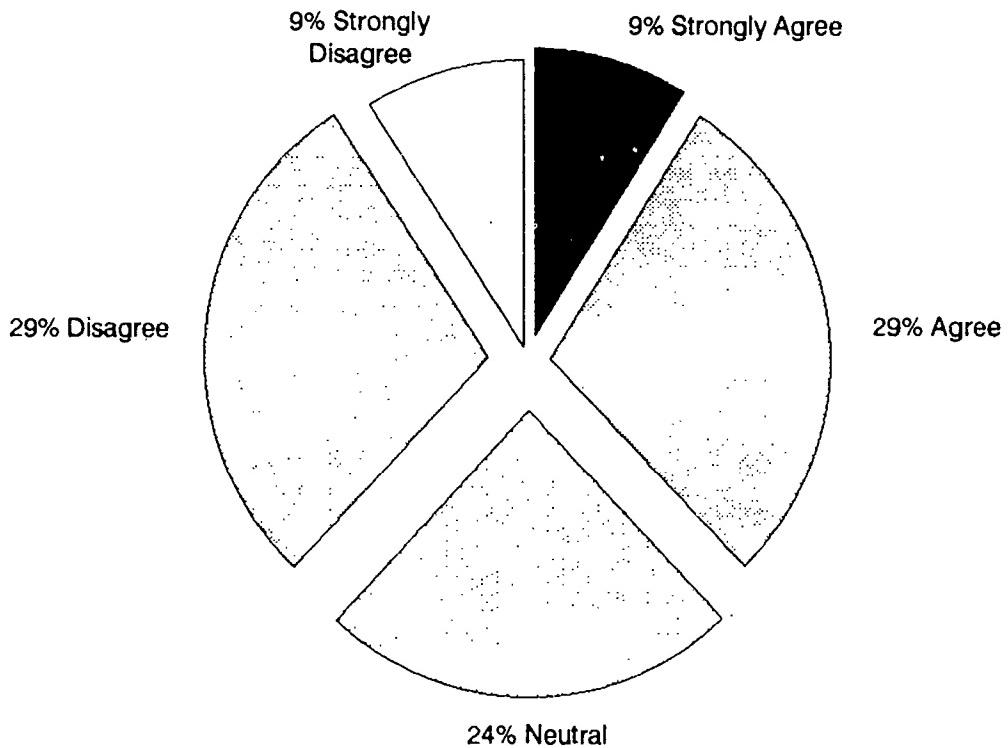
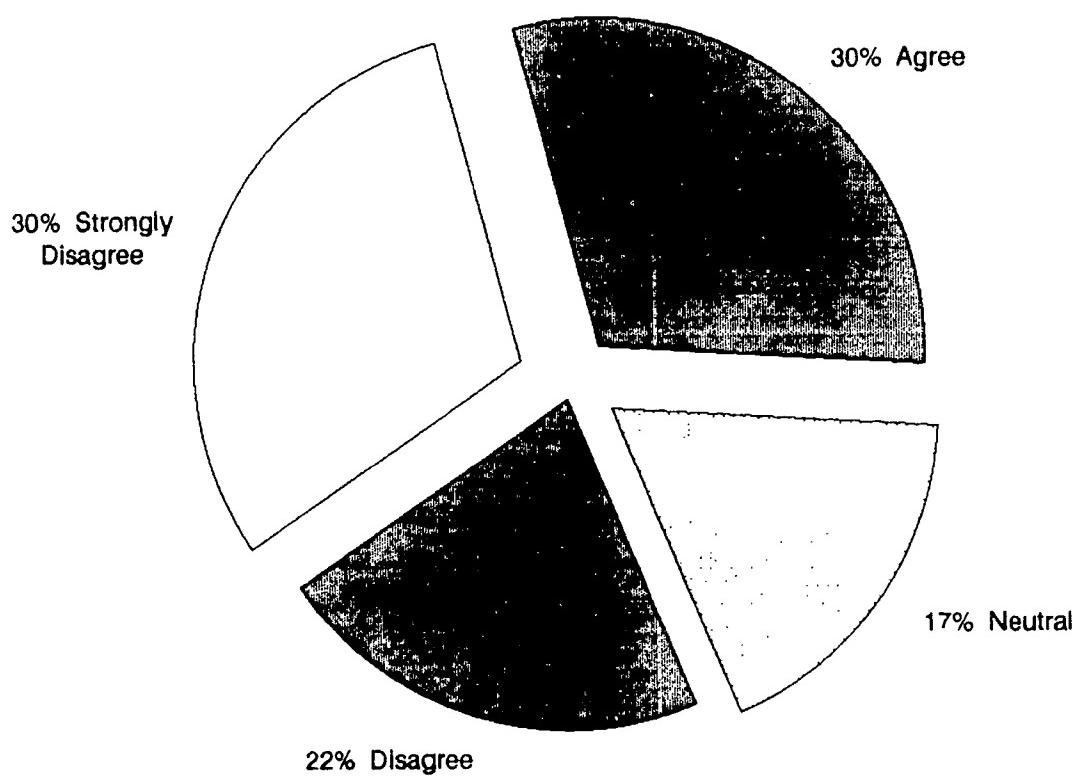


CHART 13. (Teacher Responses) I have had opportunities for inservice activities to better prepare me to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.



Having prepared a measure of administrator awareness of inservice opportunities, it was necessary to determine if teachers had actually had opportunities to obtain inservice education to help them prepare to educate students with disabilities and to become aware of services that might be provided by other parties. The responses were generally negative.

I have had opportunities for inservice activities to better prepare me to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.

No respondents strongly agreed with the statement, and only 30 percent of them agreed. Seventeen percent were neutral, 22 percent disagreed, and another 30 percent strongly disagreed.

I have had opportunities for inservice activities to help me understand the services that are available under the Job Training Partnership Act to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.

Again, no respondents strongly agreed with the statement, and only 4 percent agreed. Twenty-six percent of the respondents expressed neutrality, another 26 percent expressed disagreement, and the remaining 44 percent strongly disagreed.

I have had opportunities for inservice activities to help me understand the services that are available from state and community agencies to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.

As with the previous inquiry, no respondents strongly agreed and only 5 percent agreed. Thirty-three percent were neutral, 19 percent disagreed, and the largest single group, 43 percent, strongly disagreed.

CHART 14. (Teacher Responses) I have had opportunities for inservice activities to help me understand services that are available under the Job Training Partnership Act to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.

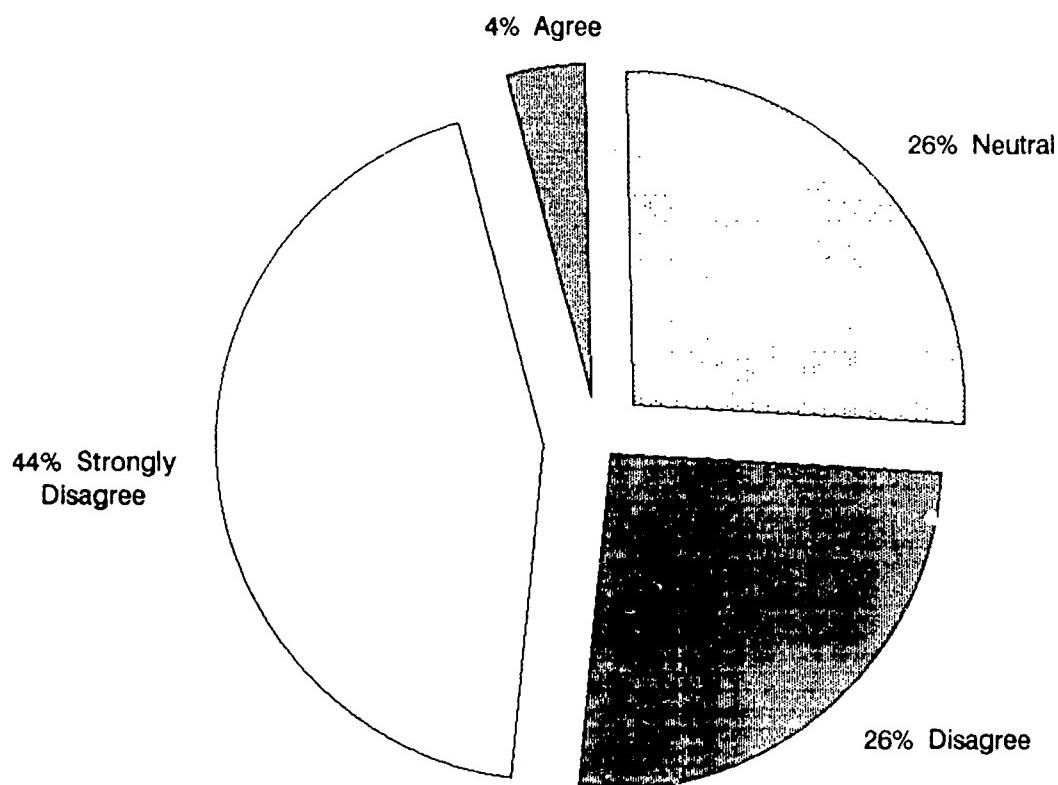
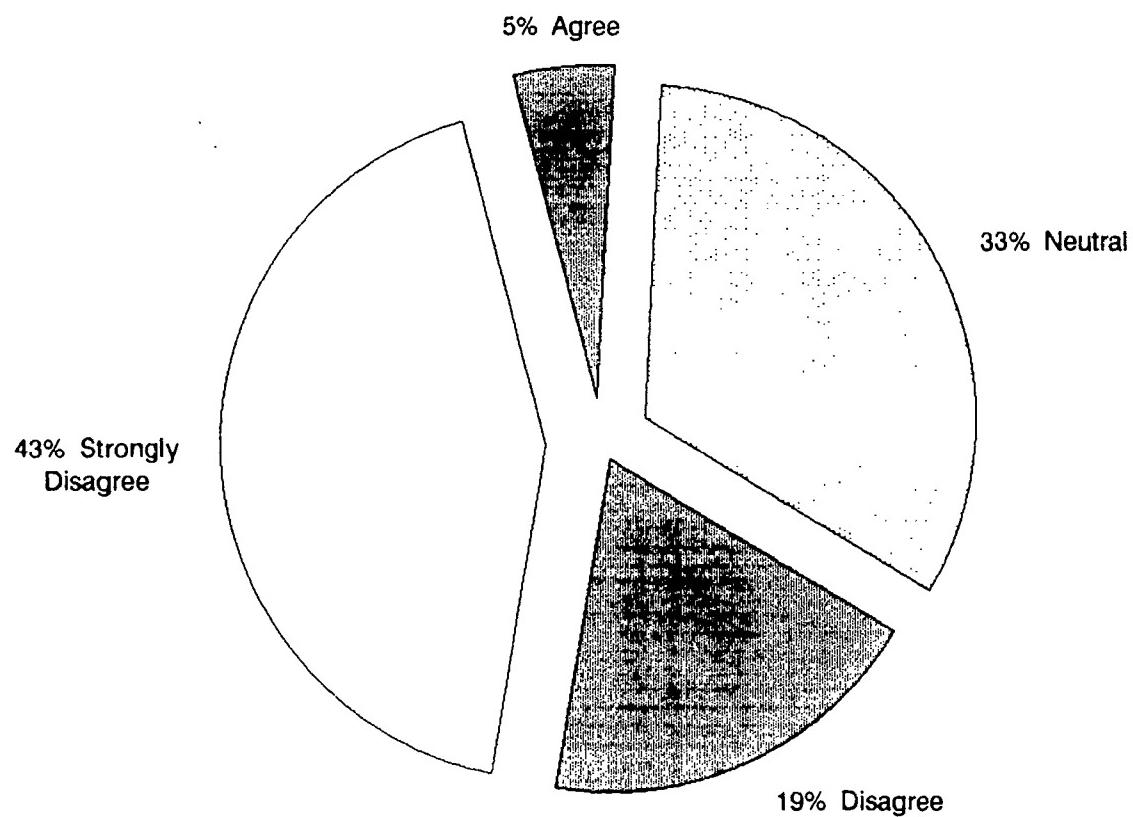


CHART 15. (Teacher Responses) I have had opportunities for inservice activities to help me understand the services that are available from state and community agencies to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.



Technical Assistance Strategies

Following the individual statements the respondents were all asked to rank in order of importance ten technical assistance strategies for helping teachers of students with disabilities. They were asked to rank the strategies from one (1) to ten (10) with one (1) being the most important. Although there were slight variations between the teachers and the administrators, and among the administrators themselves, some conclusions on consensus of opinion can be reached. The following table shows the technical assistance strategies and how each of the groups ranked them.

<u>Teachers</u>	<u>CC</u>	<u>AVTC</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Technical Assistance Strategies</u>
3	2	4	2	inservice sessions at state or regional conferences
4	4	2	4	liaison with community agencies
6	5	9	7	service directories
1	1	1	1	inservice opportunities provided by individual school districts
9	10	10	10	books
7	9	8	8	pamphlets and brochures
10	8	7	9	audio tapes
5	7	6	5	video tapes
8	6	5	6	interactive videodiscs
2	3	3	3	classroom visits by knowledgeable, helpful people

ANALYSIS

Awareness of Support Services

Although all surveyed populations indicated that they were collectively aware that some support services for students with disabilities exist, that awareness seems focused on services provided by educational institutions themselves. Teachers, far more than administrators, seemed far less knowledgeable about services that could be provided by community or state agencies. Yet, it is the teachers who must, by the very nature of contemporary American education, devote the greatest amount of time and energy in the education of students with special needs.

If students with disabilities are going to be placed in classrooms that are not specifically designed to accommodate their special needs, if they are to be provided with education by teachers who are not specifically prepared to facilitate their efforts (a practice known as "mainstreaming"), then at least all teachers should be informed of every possible source of support services.

Vocational Education, Exceptional Student Education Cooperation

The issue of cooperation among vocational education and exceptional student education administrators and staff seems to be a local issue. In some areas communication levels are high; in others they are not. Although the results of this survey do not indicate a crisis, there does seem to be room for improvement. Greater cooperation, at any level, has the potential to improve the educational services that students receive. In the words of Dr. Janet Adams, "when these people get together, they start working together, and good things happen for kids."

Student Needs and Success

Agreement was effectively universal that students with disabilities require more individualized attention than others. No respondents either disagreed or disagreed strongly, although 6 percent did express neutrality. Since the students' needs are recognized, every effort should be made to help their teachers prepare to serve them and to make the best use of whatever services are available from school, community, and state agencies.

The issue of student success was widely acknowledged. Three-quarters of the responding teachers agreed or agreed strongly. However, there was a noticeable minority in that 17 percent strongly disagreed and another 6 percent disagreed.

Although inservice education may be able to change the views of the minority, it seems unlikely that the members of that group would seek it out on their own initiative.

Inservice Opportunities

Investigation in this area revealed a virtual chasm between administrator awareness and teacher opportunity. Although two-thirds of school district administrators acknowledged that they were aware of inservice education opportunities to help teachers prepare to assist students with disabilities succeed in vocational education, only one-third of teachers noted that they had had opportunities to participate in such activities.

It is possible that while local administrators are aware of inservice opportunities, they lack the resources to provide them, or to send many teachers to participate in them.

Inservice opportunities should be more widely available. If teachers are going to be given challenges, they should be given the chance to prepare for those challenges.

On the subjects of inservice opportunities to learn about services provided by state and community agencies and by the agents of the Job Training Partnership Act, the level of agreement among teacher respondents was so low as to suggest that such activities are rarely, or randomly, available.

Inservice activities should be employed to inform teachers of the full range of resources that are available to help their students succeed in vocational programs. This might be most effectively accomplished in conjunction with activities to inform teachers about the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Furthermore, the overwhelming preference of every response group was for inservice activities to be offered in individual school districts.

Program Awareness

Clear majorities of the surveyed administrators were aware of programs specifically designed to prepare students with disabilities for careers. In the cases of the area centers and school districts two-thirds of respondents indicated that they were aware of such programs. With the emphasis in serving individuals with disabilities shifting to mainstreaming, this seems to be an adequate level of awareness in the state.

Human Resources

One of the most alarming responses resulted from asking teachers if they knew "who to call for help or information when I have a question about a student with a disability." The combination of those who agreed and those who strongly agreed yielded a meager 28 percent rate of general agreement.

This is a problem that must be addressed. Every teacher should be informed of whom they can call for help when they need it.

Current Funding

For the administrators, one of the most striking sets of results dealt with the issue of adequacy of funding. The percentage of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that "current funding for the provision of services to students with disabilities is adequate" ranged from 24 percent for community college respondents to 28 percent for each of the other groups. Forty-one percent of the community college respondents went so far as to strongly disagree. Clearly, the consensus among responding vocational education administrators in Florida is that current funding is inadequate.

Technical Assistance Strategies

The consensus of the four populations is readily apparent. The strategies may be grouped into three major categories. Four were highly preferred, three were unappreciated, and three received limited support.

All groups agreed that the most desirable strategy for helping teachers prepare to serve students with disabilities and increase their awareness and use of available services is the provision of inservice opportunities in local school districts. There are several advantages to such a strategy, including savings of time and money as well as the retention of local control in the spirit of Blueprint 2000.

Next in preference were "classroom visits by knowledgeable helpful people" and "inservice opportunities at state and regional conferences." It is not entirely surprising that administrators generally preferred conference inservice to classroom visitation while the teachers preferred classroom visitation. Teachers have every reason to be more classroom-oriented and administrators have greater opportunities to attend conferences. Nevertheless the differences were slight.

The fourth of the preferred strategies was "liaison with community agencies." This is definitely an issue that must be handled locally. Community agencies vary widely from place to place in scope, mission, and resources.

In the middle range of preference were videotapes, interactive videodiscs, and service directories. There was a slight tendency among teachers and school district administrators to prefer videotapes. Likewise, there was a slight tendency among the postsecondary institution representatives to value the use of interactive videodisc technology.

This difference may be attributable to the availability of or familiarity with interactive videodisc technology, which is more common at postsecondary institutions.

Alternatively, it may be the result of reasoning that videotapes, rather than interactive videodiscs, that might address the needs of teachers of students with disabilities are more likely to be readily and inexpensively available.

The strategies that were the least preferred included pamphlets and brochures, audiotapes, and books.

CONCLUSIONS

The survey results reflect a clear and present need for greater opportunities for professional development activities to help vocational teachers prepare to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education. There is also a need to increase the awareness of teachers and, to a lesser degree, of administrators of the financial and human resources available to them in their efforts to provide vocational education to students with disabilities.

The survey results also reflect the overwhelming preference for professional development activities conducted at the local level. By increasing cross-agency and cross-discipline professional development activities at the local level, while retaining such activities at state and regional conferences, all four of the most preferred strategies can be facilitated. Local, and even individual, concerns can be addressed, local human and financial resources can be identified, local cooperation can be encouraged, and liaisons between local education and community agencies, as well as local representatives of state agencies, can be established. Among those human resources identified can be the "knowledgeable, helpful people" who are available to visit individual classrooms to help teachers address their individual concerns. Likewise, such a forum would be an excellent vehicle, though by no means the only vehicle, to inform teachers of people to call when they need help or information and answers to their questions about providing educational services to students with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Florida Council on Vocational Education recommends that the State Board of Career Education consider adopting the following strategies.

1. Adopt an official policy encouraging school districts and community colleges to conduct cross-discipline, cross-agency professional development activities.
2. Require school districts and community colleges to include in their inservice plans a description of their efforts to assess and address the needs of vocational teachers for new knowledge and skills to more effectively provide educational services for students with disabilities.
3. In conjunction with current initiatives such as the Vocational and Adult Inservice Task Force and the State Transition Policy Board for Students with Disabilities, develop and disseminate a model professional development strategy for school districts and community colleges which would bring together vocational and special education teachers, support personnel, and local representatives of state and community agencies, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Private Industry Councils.
4. Continue present support for professional development activities at state and regional conferences that help vocational teachers prepare to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.

APPENDIX

Survey of Needs, Attitudes, and Barriers Regarding the Provision of Vocational Programs for Individuals with Disabilities

- **TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
- **ADMINISTRATORS OF VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

**Survey of Needs, Attitudes, and Barriers
Regarding the Provision of Vocational Programs
for Individuals with Disabilities**

TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements by checking (✓) the appropriate response.

1. I am aware of support services available to my students with disabilities enrolled in vocational education.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. I am aware of student services provided by community agencies.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. I am aware of student services provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. Students with disabilities are successful in vocational education when special services are provided as needed.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. Students with disabilities require more individualized attention than non-disabled students.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. I know who to call for help or information when I have a question about a student with a disability.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. There is close, ongoing communication among vocational and exceptional student education staff at my school.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. I have had opportunities for inservice activities to better prepare me to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. I have had opportunities for inservice activities to help me understand the services that are available under the Job Training Partnership Act to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. I have had opportunities for inservice activities to help me understand the services that are available from state and community agencies to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

PLEASE list the special support services of which you are aware.

PLEASE list the programs of which you are aware that are designed to assist students with disabilities to prepare for careers.

PLEASE list any inservice activities that you found to be particularly valuable.

PLEASE rank in order of importance, with one (1) indicating the most important, the following technical assistance strategies for helping teachers of students with disabilities.

- inservice sessions at state or regional conference
- liaison with community agencies
- service directories
- inservice opportunities provided by individual school districts
- books
- pamphlets, and brochures
- audio tapes
- video tapes
- interactive videodiscs
- classroom visits by knowledgeable, helpful people

PLEASE include any additional comments you would like to make.

**Survey of Needs, Attitudes, and Barriers
Regarding the Provision of Vocational Programs
for Individuals with Disabilities**

ADMINISTRATORS OF VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements by checking (✓) the appropriate response.

1. I am aware of support services available to students with disabilities enrolled in vocational education.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. I am particularly aware of the services provided under the Job Training Partnership Act to help students with disabilities succeed in vocational education programs.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. I am aware of student services provided by community agencies.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. I am aware of student services provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. I am aware of vocational education programs that are specifically designed to prepare students with disabilities for careers.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. I am aware of inservice education opportunities to help teachers prepare to assist students with disabilities to succeed in vocational education.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. There is close, ongoing communication among vocational and exceptional student education administrators at my school.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. There is joint planning among vocational and exceptional student education administrators at my school.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. Current funding for the provision of services to students with disabilities is adequate.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

PLEASE list the special support services of which you are aware.

PLEASE list the programs of which you are aware that are designed to assist students with disabilities to prepare for careers.

PLEASE rank in order of importance, with one (1) indicating the most important, the following technical assistance strategies for helping teachers of students with disabilities.

- inservice sessions at state or regional conference
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- classroom visits by knowledgeable, helpful people

PLEASE include any additional comments you would like to make.